

***Integration Joint Board***

**Date of Meeting: 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**Title of Report: Chief Social Work Officer Report 2022/2023**

**Presented by: David Gibson**

**The IJB is asked to:**

Note the content of the CSWO Report 2022/2023

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) for each of Scotland's 32 local authorities provides an annual report for Scottish Government. It is due in the autumn and relates to the previous financial year.

The full CSWO report is attached.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

The requirement for every local authority in Scotland to appoint a professionally qualified CSWO is set out in Section 3 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.

In Argyll & Bute the role of CSWO is held by the Head of Children, Families & Justice.

There11(e0483.57-y12-6)-5v)10(e) iso CSSco8(n)(o)6pS1 0 952 84.92 reW\*8SSco8(n)(o)6pS1 0

#### **4. RELEVANT DATA AND INDICATORS**

Contained within the attached report.

#### **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Social Work is key to a significant number of strategic priorities. Reference to these are contained in the attached report

#### **6. GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS**

##### **6.1 Financial Impact**

It is clear from the attached report that maintaining social work services during a period of stretched and constricting finances is becoming increasingly more difficult. The full impact of the 'cost of living crisis' and higher inflationary pressures is predicted to increase these difficulties however is out with the timescales of this report. There are on going discussions between Scottish Government and COSLA on the formation of a National Social Work Agency which could lead to national pay and conditions for the profession.

It could be argued that finances are now not the main hurdle in maintaining and developing services. Staff recruitment and retention is perhaps now of greater note.

##### **6.2 Staff Governance**

The full report sets out significant staffing challenges. This is beyond problems with recruitment and retention. For example in the case of social workers it is recognised there are simply not enough qualified social workers nationally and all local authorities are vying to recruit from an insufficient pool of potential employees. One or two authorities are dealing with this by increasing wages which can worsen the situation for other areas.

As mentioned above staff recruitment and retention is now perhaps the biggest restrictive factor in the maintenance and development of services

##### **6.3 Clinical and Care Governance**

The CSWO Report is a key element of Clinical and Care Governance at both local and national level.

#### **7. PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY**

The CSWO is the main professional advisor to the local authority on all social

work mma200000 1 263.81 194 Tm0 g0 G[ )JTJEC /AVID 21-BDC 955Tm0 -5n)6( a-6l)4-so)-5ci

